



Broughton the A Request of the Leeward Islands

LETTER

From one of the

LEEWARD ISLANDS,

Tending to shew the immediate
Necessity of a further Inspecti-
on into the State of the *British*
Sugar Colonies and Trade.

Nevis, October 17, 1734.

S I R,



N yours of the 15th of *August* last
you say, that a *Pamphlet* was pub-
lish'd in *London* in *April* 1732,
intitl'd, *A Detection of the State*
and *Situation of the present Sugar*
Planters, &c. and another in *March* 1733, in-
titl'd, *A Supplement to the Detection*, &c. and
a third in the Month of *July* following, inti-
tl'd, *An Enquiry into the Methods of retrieving*
the Sugar Trade, &c. the Drift of all which
was, to make the State of our *Sugar Colonies*
and *Trade* better known in *England* than it then
A seem'd

seem'd to be : Again you say, that many of the *Sugar Factors* there, as well as some others, who (by the Opportunities they have had of seeing Facts, and making Observations in the *West-Indies*) cannot but know the Truth, are so angry at these *Pamphlets*, that some among them found means to stop the Publication of the *Supplement* in particular, until it was too late for the publick Notice: And yet you say, none of these Gentlemen will let the World into the Motives of their Anger, but (as far as you can find) content themselves *in private*, and *upon their Honour*, to contradict or depreciate the Matters therein contain'd, as either manifestly false, or unworthy the Regard of those to whom the Cognisance of such Things more especially belongs. You think their Anger at the Discoveries that have been made, and the Methods they take to keep the Knowledge and Effect of them from the Publick, are bad Signs, and ought to excite others to search for all the Lights they can in a Case which so much affects the Community as the *Sugar Trade* is now known to do. You ask therefore, if I can account for their Anger.

For Answer: The Author of a Pamphlet, intitled, *Englishmen's Eyes opened*, charges the *Tobacco Factors*, thus: These *Factors* (p. 67. 2d Edit.) appear to me to have a Design of monopolizing all the Lands in the Plantations to themselves. One part is already mortgaged; and since they manage so, as daily to bring the Planters indebted to them, and make their Lands, [Slaves, &c.] subject to the Payment of their Book-Debts, they must inevitably, in Time, get Possession of all our Colonies and Plantations; and then they will

will ingross the whole Trade to themselves, and the poor Planters must become white English Slaves to those very Men, whose Estates are owing to their Planting, Labour, and Industry. Now this holding equally, at least, in all our Sugar Islands, the Hints given in these Pamphlets concerning it may, like enough, have anger'd the Sugar Factors; as also what is there urg'd for an Exportation of Sugar from the Place of Manufacture to the Foreign Market without introducing it into Great Britain, as tending to lessen their Consignments, altho' none know better than they, that until such Exportation shall be permitted, and the Duty on *Muscovadoes* consum'd at Home lower'd, the Nation's Sugar Trade cannot be retrieved; and the other Gentlemen may be angry, because the woful Situation of the Bulk of our Sugar Planters being there set forth, who knows but the Government may ease them (among other Pressures) of all *Additional Salaries* to the Governors, as being a Yoke about their Necks which their Fathers could not, and they can much less bear? And many other Particulars may be there seen, which cannot but enrage Men who mind only the Dictates of Self-Interest, and know not what the publick Means. These, I fear, are some of the *real* Causes of their Anger, but the Causes *pretended* are very different, and not to be come at by such as can confute them, unless by mere Chance.

On the 14th of last Month a Gentleman, in high (but not the highest) Post in the *Leeward Islands*, coming to this Island to have his Commission read and recorded, was waited on by the suppos'd Author of the Pamphlets you men-

tion, and some Discourse happen'd between them in a mix'd Company, which I shall now relate, as knowing it will conduce to satisfy your Enquiry, and when I learn farther, you shall hear again.

After the suppos'd Author had been ask'd by one of the Company, whether he did write these *Pamphlets*, and having said that as he wou'd not at present either own or disown them, so neither wou'd he now pretend to answer all the Objections that the Company might raise against them; but that, however, he knew so much of the Author as to promise for him, that he wou'd answer them in due time, or else make a Submission as publick as his Errors had been made: After this, I say, the Gentleman in Post was pleas'd to speak, thus: *I wou'd advise those here who write on Plantation Affairs, not to trust their own Skill, but to leave the publishing or not publishing of their Productions to Men of more skill in London, or rather to transmit them first to a Secretary of State, or so; for admit it had been judg'd needful to require the Commissioners for the Sale of the French Lands in St. Christopher's to answer, in Print, to what is objected to their Conduct in the Detection, wou'd not that have oblig'd Us to say some Things which might have furnish'd the Northern Colonies with Arguments to the Prejudice of the Southern? Must we not have own'd, that some of the French Lands in that Island did soon sell for more than they were at first sold for by the Commissioners, and particularly, that the suppos'd Author of these Pamphlets (which makes me think he is not the Author) did let out the Land he purchas'd at an advantageous Rent, and might have sold it again*
for

for more than it cost him? From whence our Antagonists wou'd quickly have inferr'd, that the Sugar Colonies were not in the Sinking Condition they were then said to be, and therefore had no Ground to expect Favours which might in the least derogate from the Interests of those on the Continent ---- You cannot conceive what bad use the Party in Opposition to the Government make of such Writings to the Discredit of the Ministers ----- Whatever you may think, I was then in London, and spoke with the Printer, who assur'd me, that he did not seek to have the Printing of any Tracts relating to the Colonies, as being constantly a Loss both to himself and the Bookseller ----- After all, pray tell me, what has the Author gain'd? Has he so much as got Thanks for his Intelligence? This, as I am very sure, is the Substance of what the Gentleman offer'd: He was modestly desired to write it down, but excus'd himself as not being at Leisure, and in the end left it to the Company to judge of what he had said.

To all which it was, or might have been answer'd, that if an Inhabitant in these Parts is to submit his Writings to some at Home before Publication, it must either be to those who think as he does, and then they will be treated just as he wou'd have them, or to those who think otherwise, and then of Course they will be Suppress'd as the Supplement was. The Author of these is well able to bestow 12 or 15 l. on printing and publishing a Pamphlet, and without hurting himself can give away the whole Impression; but as to laying the same first before a Secretary of State, Board of Trade, or so, he is told, that to render this Method effectual

requires no small Attendance on Great Men, more than he can give, or is fitted for ---- The reason why the Sale of the *French* Lands in St. *Christopher's* was mention'd in the *Detection*, was not so much to explain the Conduct of the *Commissioners*, as to demonstrate the real Value of a *Sugar* Plantation in the *Leeward Islands*; for their Conduct had been explain'd before in the *Account* of that Sale, from whence the Author of the *Detection* borrow'd what otherwise he would have said of the *Sugar* Plantations here; which *Account* is still in *Manuscript*, and like to remain so; because the Sale of these *French* Lands having taken effect, and the Monies arising from it being apply'd or appropriated to certain Uses, the Publication thereof now cou'd do little good to the unhappy Purchasers, and might perhaps displease those in *England* who saw Cause to confirm the Sale, which that Writer is far from doing in any Instance —

'Tis strange how some mistake the Nature of Things, and the obvious Interest of the Nation, with respect to the *Plantations*. Are not the *Northern* the Colonies of *England* as well as the *Southern*? Will she not then value them alike (let them jostle one another never so much) if they are, and may be made to continue, alike Subservient to her Interests? Her *Sugar* Colonies are engaged in a Manufacture (and can't well be engag'd in any other, or not with equal Gain to the Commonwealth) that *England* and her other Colonies cannot work up; and yet a Manufacture that neither She nor They can, as the World goes, live without; and withal, a Munufacture necessary to maintain the Ballance of her Trade with other Parts of *Europe*: Her
North

North Colonies (I don't so much mean *Maryland* and *Virginia*) have chiefly exerted their Strength (tho' capable of other Productions and Manufactures vastly beneficial to the Nation) in raising Lumber, Horses and Provisions, which, setting aside Lumber, can be of no Service (but may prove a vast Disservice) to the Nation, except as they contribute to *their own*, or the Support of *her Sugar Colonies*. This being the Truth, what if these Gentlemen had been commanded to account for their Sale of the *French Lands* in *St. Christopher's* when the *Sugar Bill* was depending in 1732, or 1733? Suppose they had then prov'd the *French Lands* there (or, if they please, the Lands in all our *Sugar Islands*) to be worth ten times more than they had sold them for; what Prejudice cou'd have thence accru'd to the *Southern Colonies*? Wou'd not their Valuableness rather have mov'd the Mother Nation to set a higher Value on them than has been hitherto done, which was the very thing sought for by that Bill? Will some Men never see, what all others not under a *Foreign Influence*, or not blinded by dark and selfish Ends, have long seen, *viz.* that the Dispute is not properly between the *North* and *South Colonies* of *England*, but between *England* and *France*, which of the Two shall gain the governing of the *Sugar Market* Abroad? --- Little did the Author of these *Pamphlets* suspect, that any Particular of his, or even of the suppos'd Author, wou'd be mention'd in this Argument; he gave no Occasion for it in the *Detection*, *Supplement*, or *Enquiry*; and he has seen too much of the Folly of *Egotism* in others, or a lugging in one's self where Affairs of a

Publick Concern ought to be the sole Subject, ever to be guilty of it : But since this has doubtless been alledg'd *in private* to take off from the Force and good Meaning of his Writings with those whom it most concern'd to consider them, I shall set down the Case : The suppos'd Author having lived many Years here in the Service of the Church, in which he was known to have behaved so as rather to be commended than blam'd, and having by the good Will of former Governors obtain'd a *Grant* in 1714, and in 1721 a *Patent* (extending, on his Death, to his Wife and Children) for about 70 Acres in the *French Part* of *St. Christopher's*, he thought he shou'd be wanting to his Family if he did not, when these Lands came to be dispos'd of by the Crown, apply for favour to those who had the Direction thereof in *England*. Accordingly he did so, but not by Means of the Lord *Bishop* of *London* (as the *Commissioners* for the Sale imagin'd) but of others in whose way he thought it lay more to serve him. As he was thus applying, it pleas'd God the late King died ; whence he concluded he must in effect begin his Sollicitations anew, and therefore implor'd the *Commissioners* to grant a little longer Time for it ; but they, deaf to all his Prayers and Pretensions, assur'd him the *Bishop* of *London* (for they wou'd still have it that his Dependance was there) cou'd not help him, and that they wou'd sell the Plantation he was in Possession of to some other Person, unless he purchas'd it immediately. What shou'd he do ? If he purchas'd, he lost all his Friends had gain'd, or were in a Way of gaining for him in *England*, which he hop'd wou'd have ended at length

length in a gracious Concession of the Plantation, without his buying it of the King; if he did not purchase, the Improvements in planting, building, &c. that he, or his Tenants, had made on it, were all irrecoverably lost to him. Reduc'd to this *Dilemma*, he purchas'd on the *Commissioners* own Terms, which (being, like the Laws of the *Medes* and *Persians*, unalterable) were not otherwise, 'tis true, harder on him than on his fellow Sufferers; and it is also true, that (like most Men of common Sagacity, and not drown'd in Debt) he made the best of a bad Bargain, and did let out his Land (to one who had Negroes and other Plantation Stock, but no Land to work them on) at a Rent not disadvantageous, and that he was offer'd (by one concern'd in the Sale, who wanted it, as I have heard, for one of his Friends who had Negroes, &c. but no Land, or not enough, to work them on) a Trifle, *i. e.* 50 *Guineas* for his Bargain. But what is this to the Point? What if he, and a very few more, made a Shift to save themselves, in some Measure, from the Ruin that fell on the Bulk of the Purchasers, who were fain to Mortgage (not to one another, we may believe) their Purchases, and their very Slaves, and what else cou'd be mortgag'd, to raise the Purchase-Money, in which *Egyptian* Bondage many of them remain unto this Day? Does this prove *St. Christopher's*, and our other *Sugar* Islands too, not to have been in the *Sinking Condition* they were then said to be? Why then shou'd any Man, who was capable of it, be blam'd for having writ these *Pamphlets*, to let those whom it concern'd, and from whom it was kept secret, see, to what a woful Pass the *British*

tish Sugar Colonies, on which so much depends, were then (as they still are) reduc'd? Or what is there in these *Pamphlets*, or in the foregoing Case of the suppos'd Author, why it shou'd be deem'd blame-worthy, even in him, to have writ them? — The Author indeed is uneasy that any thing of his shou'd serve for a Handle to those who thwart or vilify the Government; he wou'd fain hope it is not, he knows he meant not so; but if Inferences, not natural, are drawn from thence, how can he help it? Are not the best-meant Writings often tortur'd, and made to prove what no good Man will say they prove? And what Cure can be nam'd for this, that is not worse than the Evil complain'd of? I doubt these Opposing Gentlemen, and their Performances, are more minded than they need to be.

If one of their Chiefs is a rank Republican, another a Quack-Tory, and a third a Man whose Treachery has made him odious to the World; such a Combination, especially if supported by some Learning, a good deal of what is call'd Wit, and no great Sense of Morality and Religion, may readily produce something extraordinary: Thus ('tis said) a *Jew*, an *Arian*, and a *Heathen*, compil'd the *Alcoran*: Men so form'd may disturb the best Administration, and the better it is, the more, no Doubt, will they try to disturb it; but, can such a Jumble of Absurdities, or Men of the Principles avow'd throughout their Works, serve a Nation constituted as *G. Britain* is? Can their ardent Desires to have a Hand in rescuing the Publick (as these Patriots love to speak) out of Difficulties, or the Concern they pretend to for the common Safety, or the Zeal they boast of for the King's Service, ever induce

induce a wise Master to risque the Trial? May not one then venture to pronounce of them (without any Profaneness) as Mr. *Dryden* says *Wilmot E. of Rochester* did (somewhat profanely) of a luxuriant Poet after he was dead, *Not being of GOD, he could not* (they cannot) *stand.* —

The Gentleman seem'd tot triumph when he ask'd, What has the Author got by his *Pamphlets*? Has he so much as receiv'd Thanks? Alas! he labour'd with no such Prospect! He has now liv'd Seven and Twenty Years in this Island; and as his main Business was always of small Extent, he us'd now and then to take a View of the *Sugar Colonies* with Respect to the Interest of *England*, and of her Colonies on the Continent, and chiefly what Effect our losing or sinking in the *Sugar Trade* must have on the general Ballance between *G. Britain* and her Rivals of *France*; and perceiving from the most undoubted Authorities, that not a few at Home, even of those whose Business (one would think) lay that Way, were not so well seen in these Matters as their Importance to the Nation plainly requir'd, he therefore spent some of his Time in writing these *Pamphlets* for their Information, and to excite to further Enquiries; in which he conceives he did nothing unbecoming a Native of *G. Britain*, or that a Man of any Profession needs to be asham'd of, nothing but what he apprehends every Lover of his Country is always ready to do, in all Cases within his Power, without expecting a Reward, or so much as Thanks for his Pains. He stood the whole Expence of the Press himself, and never got, or desir'd to get, the least Gratification from Any Body in *England*, or elsewhere; and such, in Truth, are his Fortunes (tho' he is far from

from their fullen Temper who scorn to be oblig'd as to support him in the Rank he holds, without any. Mean while, he wonders the *Printer* should say he was a *Loser* by these *Traſts*; for the *Bookſeller* has charg'd the Author as much a Sheet for printing them as is uſually paid by others, and the ſame, and all his other Charges, have been allow'd him in *Accompt Current* with the Author; and the *Bookſeller* is ſo far from complaining of any Loſs, that in all his Letters he is very thankful to the Author; and ſeems to cover more of his Buſineſs. — As to the Gentleman's leaving it to the Company to judge of what had paſs'd, 'twas answer'd, that poſſibly ſome of them had not enough weigh'd the Subject, while others might decline openly to contradict a Perſon of his Note and Diſtinction here; that the *Pamphlets* ſo often nam'd had been for ſome Time publiſh'd in *London*; that the Readers every where muſt and wou'd be the Judges; that the fitteſt Place to begin their Confutation was at Home, where the Preſs is free to all; and that the not beginning it there as yet (after ſo much Anger and Reſentment) may ſurely be imputed to a Conviction, that nothing worth while can be ſaid againſt them in the fair and open, or in any other but the clandeſtine, or over-bearing Way.

It muſt be confeſs'd, to this Gentleman's Praise, that he diſcour's'd with Condeſcenſion, Frankneſs, and Good Humour, which ſeem as natural to him, as the Reverse is to ſome others in High Poſt, on this Side the Globe.

You tell me, the *French* have taken *Philipſburg*, and are advancing, both on the *Rhine* and in *Italy*. The obſtructing of *Stanislaus* from remounting

mounting the *Polish* Throne touches them so nearly, that they will, doubtless, seek a full Revenge; and, such is their exemplary Love of their King and Country, such are their other Virtues, that one (I think) could hardly forbear to wish them Success, did not their Attempts tend to destroy the Ballance which the Quiet of *Europe* demands to be preserv'd, or interfere with the prime Interests of our own Country. But, since these are sometimes the Case, give me Leave, *Sir*, in Return for your News, to tell you Something that may be new to you too; which is this: If a Rupture happens soon betwixt the *French* and us, and they should get the Start, and send out a proper Force, to join their Colonies of *Martinico*, &c. they might, with no great Pains or Risque, sweep clean our Six *Sugar* Islands; as is but too clearly made out in the *Detection* and the *Supplement*. And what then wou'd our Colonies on the Continent be good for? *Mr. Wood* says, (*Survey of Trade*, p. 149.) *Without our Southern Plantations, our North Colonies can be of no Advantage to us; since what they are at present, must cease, on the Decay or Loss of the Sugar Islands, from whence their Value to G. Britain chiefly arises, and for Want of which they would otherwise be prejudicial Colonies to their Mother Country.* They might indeed have been highly beneficial to her otherwise, if, instead of employing their main Strength in raising Lumber, Horses and Provisions, it had been employ'd in the other Works mention'd in the *Supplement*; but, since little that Way has been done since *Wood's* Book was written, his Judgment concerning them is of much the same Weight now that it was then; for sure our Nation would think Five

or

or Six Hundred Thousand of her Hands ill employ'd on the *North* Continent, if they had little else to do but to provide the *French*, *Dutch*, and *Danish* Settlements in the *West-Indies* with Lumber, Horses and Provisions. It is also to be noted, that, on anyone of our *Sugar* Islands being attack'd by *France*, no Relief can be had from our neighbouring Islands; for, tho' the Troops that came from *England* in the Year 1690, to retake *St. Christopher's*, were join'd with above 1200 Voluntiers from *Barbadoes*, 400 from *Antegoa*, 300 from *Montserat*, and 600 from *Nevis*, yet, as none of these Islands (except *Antegoa*) have such Numbers now to spare, so their Itch of Voluntering is pretty near cur'd by the late *Sale* of the conquer'd Lands in *St. Christopher's*, where none of the Heirs or Descendants of those who ventur'd or lost their Lives in retaking that Island from the *French*, in 1690, or of those who conquer'd those very Lands again in 1702, or such of the present Inhabitans as were harrafs'd all the last War with *France*, in defending it from the Enemy, were so much as heard, what they had to say for themselves, but the Whole was sold to the highest Bidders. — But then, if, on such Rupture, we were to take the Start, and send out a Number of Ships (for Land Forces are not necessary) sufficient to guard the Coasts, and to intercept the homeward and outward bound from and to *Martinico*, *Hispaniola*, &c. and, at the same Time, would take all possible Care to hinder those Places from being supply'd with Provisions from the *North* Colonies and *Ireland*, whether directly, or (which is the same) by Means of selfish Traders in our own *Sugar* Islands, or of the *Dutch* at *Curaçoa*, *St. Eustace*,

place, &c. or of the *Danes* from *St. Thomas*, &c. who have all of them Provisions in great Plenty (even for Re-exportation) from *Ireland* and our Colonies on the Continent ; the *French* Power in these Parts wou'd soon be broken, and *France* might for ever bid *Adieu* to her Empire in *America*, north of the equinoctial Line; for her *Louisiana* is maintain'd (amidst a Thousand Difficulties and Discouragements) on no other View than to *subserve*, in Time, to the Possessions she has, or is gaping after, in the *West-Indies*.

And let me add, that *France* can hardly gain her Ends on *G. Britain*, in the *Sugar Trade*, while *K. George II.* reigns, and is serv'd, as hitherto, by wise, vigilant, and honest Men.

I am, Sir, &c.

F I N I S.

1. **A** LETTER (to the) Rt. Rev. the Lord Bishop of *London*, from an Inhabitant of his Majesty's *Leeward-Caribbee-Islands*. Containing some Considerations on his Lordship's *Two Letters* of May 19, 1727. The first to the Masters and Mistresses of Families in the *English* Plantations Abroad; the second to the Missionaries there. In which is inserted, a short Essay concerning the Conversion of the *Negro-Slaves* in our *Sugar-Colonies*: Written in the Month of *June*, 1727, by the same Inhabitant.

2. A Detection of the State and Situation of the present Sugar Planters, of *Barbadoes* and the *Leeward Islands*; with an Answer to this Query, Why does not *England*, or her Sugar Islands, or both, make and settle more Sugar Colonies in the *West-Indies*? Written in the Month of *Dec.* 1731, by an Inhabitant of one of his Majesty's *Leeward-Caribbee-Islands*; and humbly dedicated to the Rt. Hon. Sir *Robert Walpole*.

3 A Supplement to the Detection of the State and Situation of the present *Sugar Planters* of *Barbadoes* and the *Leeward-Islands*: Shewing, among other New Matters, that the surest way for *England* to command the Sugar-Market Abroad, is to contract rather than enlarge her Sugar Colonies. In a Letter from an Inhabitant of one of his Majesty's *Leeward-Caribbee-Islands*, to a Member of the House of Commons in *England*. To which is added, a Letter from a Traveller in the *Caribbees* to his Friend in *London*.

4. An Enquiry into the Methods that are said to be now proposed in *England*, to retrieve the Sugar Trade. By the Author of the Detection of the State and Situation of the present *Sugar Planters* of *Barbadoes* and the *Leeward-Islands*. Written about the Middle of *April*, 1733.